

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-01 SP-02 STR-04 TRSE-00

LAB-04 SIL-01 SAM-01 OMB-01 AGR-05 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

L-02 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-06 TAR-01 FEAE-00

/091 W

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R 251712Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8940

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION OECD PARIS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 04913

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EGEN, PFOR, EEC, UK

SUBJECT: BRITIAN AND THE COMMUNITY

REF: LONDON 4010

1. SUMMARY: THE GERMANS HAVE WELCOMED BRITISH
CABINET DECISION TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF CONTINUING
BRITISH MEMBERSHIP IN THE COMMUNITY. THE COMPROMISES
REACHED ON THE VARIOUS RENEGOTIATION ISSUES
REVEALED THAT THE FRG PLACES HIGH VALUE ON CONTINUED
BRITISH MEMBERSHIP IN THE COMMUNITY, FOR THE
GERMANS CONSISTENTLY TOOK CARE NOT TO PUSH THEIR
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POSITION TO POINT THAT THEY MIGHT WEAKEN WILSON'S

STATUS AT HOME. THEY HAVE NOT BEGUN CONTINGENCY PLANNING FOR HANDLING BRITISH WITHDRAWAL, AND IN FACT WOULD RATHER NOT THINK ABOUT THIS POSSIBILITY. THEY FEAR THAT ANY DISCUSSION ON THEIR PART OF BRITISH WITHDRAWAL WOULD GIVE MORE AMMUNITION TO ANTI-MARKETEERS. HOWEVER, IF BRITISH DECIDE TO WITHDRAW, THE GERMANS WOULD BE WILLING TO NEGOTIATE AN EFTA-TYPE AGREEMENT, FOR THEY WOULD WANT TO KEEP BRITAIN COMMITTED AS CLOSELY AS POSSIBLE TO THE CONTINENT. END SUMMARY

2.

THE IMPORTANCE OF KEEPING BRITAIN INSIDE THE COMMUNITY IS CLEARLY RECOGNIZED IN BONN. WIDE-RANGING ECONOMIC INTERESTS, THE NASCENT BUT GROWING BENEFITS OF POLITICAL COOPERATION, AND BRITAIN'S ROLE AS A COUNTERWEIGHT IN EXPANDING THE FORCES BROUGHT TO BEAR ON COMMUNITY DECISION-MAKING, ALL ARGUE IN GERMAN EYES FOR SUPPORTING CONTINUED BRITISH MEMBERSHIP. SCHMIDT HIMSELF HAS MADE A SINCERE EFFORT TO EASE THE WAY FOR THE BRITISH TO REMAIN IN THE EC, BEGINNING WITH HIS SPEECH TO LABOR PARTY CONFERENCE LAST NOVEMBER.

3. IN THE RENEGOTIATIONS, THE FRG TRIED AT TIMES TO STRIKE A HARD BARGAIN, BUT IT WAS ALWAYS CONSTRAINED BY OVER-RIDING GOAL TO EASE WAY FOR BRITISH DECISION TO REMAIN WITHIN COMMUNITY. BRITISH CABINET DECISION TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF CONTINUING MEMBERSHIP WAS THUS WELCOMED IN BONN. HOWEVER, OUR CONTACTS STILL HAVE DOUBTS AS TO FIRMNESS OF BRITISH LINKS WITH CONTINENT EVEN IF REFERENDUM SUPPORTS CONTINUED MEMBERSHIP. ON THIS SCORE THEY HAVE EXPRESSED SOME CONFUSION OVER ROLE OF REFERENDUM IN BRITISH CONSTITUTIONAL SYSTEM AND QUESTION OF WHAT WILL CONSTITUTE AN ACCEPTABLE RESULT OF REFERENDUM. WILL 51 PERCENT APPROVAL BE NECESSARY, OR DOES APPROVAL BY ONLY 40 PERCENT STILL LEAVE OPEN THE

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POSSIBILITY OF CONTINUED MEMBERSHIP? ONE SENIOR OFFICIAL WHO WAS IN DUBLIN HAS STRESSED THAT IT IS IN US AND GERMAN INTEREST THAT THERE BE A DECISION ONCE AND FOR ALL. HE EXPRESSED A NOT UNUSUAL LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN RELIABILITY OF BRITISH EVEN IF THEY DECIDE TO STAY IN.

4. ON THE WHOLE OUR SOURCES BELIEVE THAT THE

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 04913

COMMUNITY HAS ACCOMPLISHED A GOOD DEAL OVER THE PAST
YEAR. IT HAS SURVIVED DIVISIVE IMPACT OF ENERGY CRISIS.
IT IS DEVELOPING NEW AND MORE VIABLE INSTITUTIONAL
MECHANISMS. IT HAS MADE FAR-REACHING DECISIONS
ON REGIONAL AND OTHER INTRA-COMMUNITY PROBLEMS AND
IT HAS PROCEEDED WITH SOME SUCCESS IN ITS EXTERNAL
ECONOMIC RELATIONS, SUCH AS REACHING A MUTUALLY-
ACCEPTABLE AGREEMENT WITH THE ACP COUNTRIES. THE
GERMANS HAVE HAD HIGH REGARD FOR BRITAIN'S ROLE IN

THIS WORK, AS WELL AS FOR BRITISH OFFICIALDOM WITH
WHOM THEY HAVE WORKED IN THE EC, AND THEY HAVE BEEN
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IMPRESSED WITH HOW RAPIDLY THE BRITISH HAVE FITTED
INTO A LONG-STANDING AND COMPLICATED OPERATING
MECHANISM. THE GERMANS ACKNOWLEDGE WITH SOME REGRET
THAT BRITAIN'S PRESENT VIEW TOWARD INTEGRATION IS
RATHER SIMILAR TO THAT OF FRANCE UNDER POMPIDOU.
HOWEVER JUST AS WITH THE PASSAGE OF TIME FRANCE HAS
COME AROUND, SO DOES THE FRG EXPECT THAT TIME WOULD
EXERT A HEALTHY INFLUENCE ON BRITISH ATTITUDES TOWARD
THE ACHIEVEMENT OF EUROPEAN UNION.

5. IN FACT, OF COURSE, CONSEQUENCES OF ADVERSE
RESULT OF REFERENDUM IS SOMETHING GERMANS DO NOT
NOW WISH TO CONSIDER. IT IS CLEAR TO US THAT
THE GERMANS HAVE NOT GIVEN SERIOUS THOUGHT AS TO WHAT
WOULD HAPPEN IN CASE OF UK DECISION TO WITHDRAW.
THE FRG IS OPERATING ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT THE UK
REFERENDUM WILL COME OUT IN FAVOR OF CONTINUED
MEMBERSHIP. OUR CONTACTS HAVE EXPRESSED CONCERN
THAT GERMAN OFFICIAL SPECULATION ON CONSEQUENCES OF
ADVERSE RESULT WOULD IMMEDIATELY BECOME PUBLIC.
THE ANTI-MARKETEERS IN BRITAIN WOULD SEIZE UPON
THIS AS ANOTHER ARGUMENT FOR WITHDRAWAL, CLAIMING
THAT THE COMMUNITY IS ALREADY WRITING OFF THE BRITISH
OR IS PLANNING TO TAKE CARE OF THEIR INTERESTS IN
SOME OTHER WAY.

6. FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS--TRADE, SECURITY,
ENERGY COOPERATION, TO NAME PERHAPS THE MOST
IMPORTANT--THE GERMANS WOULD WANT TO KEEP BRITAIN
COMMITTED TO THE CONTINENT. SHOULD THE BRITISH
DECIDE TO LEAVE THE EC, THE FRG WOULD BE RECEPTIVE
TO SOME KIND OF SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP, CERTAINLY
NO LESS FAVORABLE THAN TO OTHER EFTA MEMBERS WHO DID
NOT JOIN THE COMMUNITY. THE NEGOTIATIONS
WOULD NOT BE EASY, FOR BRITAIN'S SIZE AS A TRADING
PARTNER WOULD MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR THE GERMANS
TO TOLERATE UK SUBSIDIES FOR SHIPBUILDING,
AIRCRAFT, AND OTHER INDUSTRIES. THE GERMANS ALSO
REALIZE THAT THEIRS WOULD NOT BE THE DETERMINING
VOICE IN SUCH NEGOTIATIONS. THEY COULD BE COUNTED
UPON TO USE THEIR INFLUENCE TO MODERATE DIFFERENCES
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BETWEEN OTHER EC MEMBERS AND THE BRITISH AND IN PARTICULAR TO FIND SOLUTIONS TO SPECIAL PROBLEMS OF OTHER EC MEMBERS, SUCH AS DENMARK'S DEPENDENCE ON THE UK MARKET FOR ITS AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS, SO AS TO ARRIVE AT A NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH BRITAIN WHICH COULD SERVE BOTH THE CONTINENT AND BRITAIN OVER THE LONG RUN. IN GERMAN EYES, THE PROBLEM OF WORKING OUT A NEW ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP WITH BRITAIN WOULD BE MUCH LESS SERIOUS THAN THAT OF DEALING WITH THE IMPACT OF BRITISH WITHDRAWAL ON THE COMMUNITY ITSELF. WE WILL EXAMINE THIS PROBLEM IN A SUBSEQUENT MESSAGE.
HILLENBRAND

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